

It seems so trite and petty to be thinking about such trifling personal matters when our people is being so savagely attacked by that unspeakably vicious head of creatures that calls itself the German nation. Because an insignificant official of theirs was assassinated in Paris by ^{the} a half-crazed youth, Greenspan, whom the most recent piece of cruelty, which they inflicted on tens-of-thousands of Polish Jews who happened to reside in Germany, completely unbalanced, they are avenging themselves on the entire Jewish population which is at their mercy. It seems to me that the most fiendish tortures which the human mind can possibly conceive are as naught to those which this degenerate brood is wreaking upon innocent human beings. All the atrocity tales described or imagined during the World War seem kindness by the side of what the monsters are devising against us. Why do I say this? Because there is in all of this fiendishness an element never present in the long series of cruelty that human being inflicted on their fellowmen. I refer to the element of coldly rationalized justification for all this inhumanity. When human beings get to the point where they can use their reason to justify the extinction of the last trace of mercy for sensitive conscious ~~aguzz~~ agonized human beings, and continue in pure delight to add torment to torment, then all life loses its meaning, and all our attempts discover to ~~discover~~ any goodness and beauty in it are but a mockery.

Nor is it merely sympathy with the thousands who have been despoiled of their last belongings and thrust into concentration camps, or with the hundreds who have been driven to suicide by incessant houndings, that embitters the lives of the rest of us who are at a safe distance from those hellish fiends. It is the fear and anxiety lest they spawn their slimy poisonous brood in the few places in the world where conscience has not yet been asphyxiated that destroys our peace of mind. Who knows but that this very book might not one day fall into their bloody hands. More than once has my sleep been disturbed by nightmares

in which they figured. What we have come to! Nations and States proudly defying all human decencies and acclaiming terrorism as their sovereign law.

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Saturday night, November 12, 1938

Golden ~~XXXXX~~ sunset, music, Plato interpreted by his most eminent virtuoso, Joe Wett, and I, sitting solitary in a flat in Jerusalem, having just brought up emergency water which I pumped downstairs from a reserve supply, because the water pipes which were smashed somewhere near Ras-el-ain about a week ago are still unrepaired, I am wondering what sort of a world this is, which can harbor such violent contrasts of good and evil. All this makes my life like that of an extinct volcano, idyllic peace without and seething chaos within.

Exactly at 11:00 tonight there was a break in the calm which has prevailed in these parts for some time, and shooting, single shots followed by machine gun firing, like that which marked the weird nights when the old city was invaded by the bandits, has started again. An end to the idyllic peace!

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Thursday, November 17, 1938

The water supply was resumed last night after an interruption of fully five days.

While the meeting of the Senate yesterday was proceeding, we heard a shot that seemed to come from somewhere near the building we were in (Mathematics Institute). The secretary, Dr. Ben-David then informed us that this was part of the student target practice, which then kept up for some time.

I am at my worst and unhappiest at faculty meetings, apparently because I find it hard to form opinions worth expressing concerning the matters usually discussed at such meetings. I felt that way in all the years I took part in the meetings of the Seminary faculty, and I feel the same way here. The added difficulty of speaking freely in Hebrew is a contributory cause as well.

More than two hours of the meeting yesterday were taken up with the elections of members to the Executive Committee (p.194) of which Shocken is the head, and to the Standing Committee. () Roth having been one of those elected in spite of his having refused, insisted in his refusal. The question then came up whether or not he must state the reason for his refusing to serve. He refused to give the reason for his refusing to serve because he said he didn't want to reopen a chapter of faultfinding which is of long standing. The reference is apparently to the revolution which took place in the administration when Magnes was shorn of his authority three years ago. Up to that time he and Kligler had helped Magnes to administer the University according to Anglo-American methods. Since then it is being administered according to German methods. What that means in other terms than the transfer of authority from one set of people to another, I am unable to say, because I don't know enough of the inner workings of the University.

I experienced one of those rare moments of keen delight last Tuesday when I came from the University and found a copy of Ira's "What We Mean by Religion" which is based on my "The Meaning of God..". Coming on top of a successful three hour session of the course in Principles of Education, this experience was the climax of a perfect day. The outward form of the book is very much more pleasing to the eye than that of "Creative Judaism," and the text reads splendidly.

I certainly have good reason to count myself fortunate in having my ideas promulgated to a greater degree than is usually the case with men of such mediocre ability like myself. I attribute this good fortune to an unusually favorable combination of circumstances and to rare connections, both academic and personal.

Fortunate as I have been in my opportunities as a teacher, so unfortunate ~~xxx~~ was I in my lack of opportunities as a student. The most important years of my adolescence and youth passed without my having had a single teacher who could direct or inspire me in my studies. I was never given a scientific training which I had longed for, and my knowledge of the humanities was little more than elementary by the time I was graduated from CCNY in 1900. I got very little out of the five years of Latin and four years of Greek I took there. I learned more in one year of French than I did of the ancient languages. Even my English was none too good, as is still evident in the first volumes of this journal. The same applies to my Jewish studies. I mention all this (which I have dwelt on once before in this journal) to point out the mixed feelings with which I now read Plato's and Aristotle's writings. I rejoice at becoming acquainted at first hand with those two master minds and I regret not having known them that way all along.

On the other hand perhaps it is better that I did not know them too well, or I might have fallen under their domination to such an extent that they might have inhibited my own thinking. It is this latter result that, I believe, is responsible for the kind of attitude that Leon Roth here or Morris Cohen in America displays, an attitude of negativity, if not sterility, a sort of modernized mediocrity which meets every problem with a sort of (p.195) frame of mind. How is it really that all the philosophers of pre-modern times who had known Plato and Aristotle so well learned from them to quibble but not

to think? Perhaps Plato and Aristotle themselves did not realize fully the implications of their own great intuitions. Take for example the remarkable question Plato discusses in The Republic (587) as to the interval that separates the tyrant from the true king. The very thought of putting such a question and attempting to answer it is an anticipation of the most advanced stage of the scientific approach in which we attempt to apply quantitative measurement to qualitative being. If Plato had realized what he was saying, could he at the same time have spoken so derogatorily of the experimental method as he does in the same book? (cf. 530-531).

Some time ago I said to Prof. Hugo Bergman that I wanted to see him and talk to him about myself. Yesterday when we met at the University he suggested that he better come to see me because in his house he is disturbed by telephones. I made the appointment for this afternoon at 4:30. When he came I told him of my decision to go back to America at the end of this year. He of course had heard about it, and he expressed his regret. I then made the suggestion which I had made also to Dr. Senator some weeks ago at the same time that I told him of my decision, namely that I be invited to give a series of lectures once every two years during the summer semester which usually lasts ten weeks after Pesah. He as well as Senator thought well of the suggestion.

Bergman then made a remark which took me by surprise. He said that when some weeks ago word got round that I intended to return to America, Buber said to him that it was his (Bergman's) fault that he (Bergman) made no special effort to persuade me to stay.

I then got a talking with Bergman about Buber. I have always been wanting to know what were Buber's ideas about religion, and the specific questions of belief, so I thought here was a good opportunity

since Bergman was or is one of his disciples. And this is what I learned: ~~that~~ Buber's outlook has undergone a radical change. Before the war Buber was a pantheistic mystic, but he has since evolved into a dualistic theist. He now holds practically the traditional view of the divine personality as an entity external to the world. I then went on to ask whether Buber believes in the historicity of the miracles recorded in the Bible, and in supernatural revelation as external events, and Bergman replied in the affirmative. In answer to my question: How about Jean d'Arc and others like her who claimed they heard voices. Again Bergman said that according to Buber in those cases too supernatural events actually took place. Without ^{all} that Bergman ~~said~~ said, Buber does not believe in the necessity of practical observances.

I can now understand what moved Buber to take strong exception to my ideas about God, which he had read in "The Meaning of God.." as he told me in a casual conversation we had in a bus on the way to the University in the beginning of the summer.

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Friday, November 18, 1938.

Typical of the atmosphere here these days is the sight of a number of students who came to my house with their gheffir uniforms and rifles, when they had to appear before the committee - Dushkin, Brill and myself -- to be interviewed for admission to the pedagogy department of the University. I noted that when those who had had some military training were called into the room where we were sitting from the backroom where they had been asked to wait, they clicked their heels in military fashion.

I think this military training is a wonderful thing for our Jewish youth. If we are to survive in this cruel world we must have lots of fighting courage. I am referring to those few places in the world where we still have a fighting chance. For the same reason I

believe that it is the duty of democratic countries to arm to the teeth in defense against Fascism and Nazism. Otherwise they are bound to be swamped. So long as the anti-democratic forces were ill-defined there really was no excuse for democracy to arm. Military preparations could then be employed for one purpose, viz conquest and imperialism. But when there is no mistake about the aggressive policy of three such powers as Germany, Italy and Japan, and about their intention to act in concert to dominate the world and suppress every vestige of democracy, it is nothing less than criminal negligence to leave democracy defenseless and ~~xxxx~~ exposed to their ravages. In fact they don't even have to go to the trouble of going to war; all they need is to rattle their sabres and the democratic peoples are frightened out of their wits and are ready not only to yield whatever is demanded of them, but even to surrender their democratic institutions and freedom of expression in order to conciliate those who have practically become their masters.

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Saturday, November 19, 1938

According to the letter I got yesterday from Ira, the reaction of the Friday night group with which he meets once a month (consisting of Golub, Cowen, Edidin, Guzik, Janowsky, Halkin, Alper, Dinin) toward the statement I had sent him about the end of August in reference to the need of revising our conception of Jewish nationalism was most violent. (See p.170 original text) The main point in that statement was that we should regard ourselves as members not of a de facto but of a messianic nationality. "The seemed to feel," Ira writes, "that you were desperately seeking to stem the tide of anti-Semitism with a word. The difference between defacto nationhood and 'aspiring to become a nation' did not appeal to them as either an effective clarification or as good tactics. It indicated for them a willingness to surrender the whole program of Reconstructionism, of cultural pluralism, of democratic

nationalism. One of them pointed out that by saying we should not desire nationhood until there is a world federation of states was tantamount to the declaration of the Jews at the beginning of the emancipation, when they put off the return to Palestine until the messianic age. They too repudiated de facto nationhood - but it didn't help much. On the contrary, they say, we should reaffirm our faith in the possibilities of distinguishing between the state and the nation, and insist although we are a nation, seeking to rebuild our homeland, we are nevertheless legitimate members of the political unit called U.S. Others seemed to feel that the publication of the paper would weaken the morale of the Zionists in this country, making them believe that all our efforts for Palestine at this time are not only futile but wrong."

I am not surprised at the reaction of those named above, because I am quite sure they have not given sufficient thought to the problem of nationalism, and they still operate with the outworn ideas promulgated by Bauer, who has had a deeper influence on Jewish thinking of the last generation than even Ahad ha Am. The truth is that in urging the distinction between a de facto nationalism and messianic nationalism I was carrying out the logical conclusion of the main premise to Judaism as a civilization. Such a distinction is actually forecast in the proposal that in countries which do not recognize cultural minorities, we can live our Judaism only as an ancillary civilization. Doesn't that imply yielding to the force majeure of the State and thereby accepting its decree to its citizens not to profess any other national allegiance. Isn't that as good as actual surrender of de facto Jewish nationhood. But it does not involve a surrender of messianic nationhood, since the State (at least the democratic one) does not concern itself with the messianic beliefs of its citizens.

On the other hand, it is ridiculous to identify messianic nationalism with what the Jews declared "at the beginning of the emancipation when they put off the return of Palestine until the messianic age." What they did was actually to renounce Judaism as a civilization. Merely putting off the return of Palestine until the messianic age may denote a too literal interpretation of Jewish tradition, as is actually the case of the Agudists, who strenuously resist the Zionist movement. Besides, it is a fact that before long came the Reformists and they renounced the Jewish claim to Palestine, even when the messianic age arrived. The slogan of American Reformists was "America is our Zion and Washington our Jerusalem." How can any one reasonably identify such an attitude with one in which apart from all questions of nationalism, Palestine is regarded as the very sine qua non of the type of Jewish life which is tenable nowadays? But the point that I suggest as in need of being stressed nowadays is that the indispensability of Palestine is due to our regarding Judaism as a civilization and the Jewish people as aspiring to messianic nationalism and is not due to our being a de facto nation.

Those who reacted so violently to my suggestion did so apparently because they regarded that suggestion as the antithesis of "reaffirming our faith in the possibilities of distinguishing between the state and the nation." In reply I wish to point out that instead of being the antithesis of my suggestion, such reaffirmation is logically and inherently implied in my suggestion. What actually is the meaning of the affirmation that it is essential to distinguish between the nation and the state? It certainly cannot mean that the nation should in no respect act as a unit. But if there are certain matters in respect to which it is to act as a unit, how is it to do so, if not through its General Will. That General Will constitutes the state. You may say the existing government is not the state but only a temp-

orary manifestation of the state. You can make a distinction between the government and the nation so as not to feel morally bound to heed the former. In fact, in a democratic country such a distinction is actually made, since you are given the right to change the government. But you are not permitted to overthrow the state, i.e. the very General Will which gives you the right to change the government. You can no more separate the General Will of a nation from the nation itself, than you can separate the will of a person from a person.

If, therefore, we are to attach any tenable meaning to the phrase "distinguishing between the state and the nation," that meaning can be only the following: The right of a nation to live and to carry on does not involve such absolute sovereignty as is implied in the theory underlying modern states, to the effect that such right is unlimited. We should strenuously maintain that the state or the General Will of any nation must be subordinate to a super-state of the world, that is to the General Will of mankind. Unfortunately no nation at present accepts this conception of the state, and so long as we Jews insist on our nationhood we cannot do so in the sense in which they call themselves nations, since that would mean challenging the nation of which we are a part, not for the sake of a higher ideal, but for the sake of insistence upon the same objectionable conception of nationhood for ourselves, a nationhood whose Will is sovereign. On the other hand, if we say that so long as nations insist upon being absolute and sovereign we do not want to be a nation, we are living up to the only true and justifiable intent of the distinction between the state and the nation because we are then challenging all nations to surrender their absolute sovereignty for the sake of their own and the world good as well as ours.

This morning I called on Buber. Somehow I couldn't warm up to him in all the time that he has been here since last Pesah. I had expected him to return the visit I paid him at the hotel when he arrived here recently, but he did not show up. Yesterday I received from the University a copy of an article by him on (p.199) which I have read with a great deal of avidity. For once I learned something worth while from Buber. Having practically made up my mind some time ago that I wouldn't stand on ceremonies, but call on him again, in order to establish closer relations with him, I was impelled by the favorable impression his article made on me to carry out my resolution. So, taking along a copy of my I went to see him.

The subject-matter of his article constituted the basis of the first part of our conversation. (I can't help remarking again, as I did after my first visit to him, that with a man of such parts and with so many books to his credit, I should have to be the one to make conversation. To this day I recall that whenever I would go to visit Schechter I would never have to worry what I should talk about with him because I was always sure he would provide the stimulus. That was the reason, I suppose, his company was so enjoyable.) In that article he makes the point that when Samuel saw that the hereditary priesthood with the Ark failed the Israelites during the crisis brought on by the victories of the Philistines, he tried to reestablish the early charismatic type of prophecy as the directive and administrative factor in the life of the people. When I called to his attention the fact that the verse in Psalms (p.200) didn't exactly jibe with that reconstruction of Samuel's role, he offered the usual explanation: "The reference to Samuel was added later." He found the other argument I offered somewhat harder to parry, namely, the fact that the prophets never meddled with the law. His reply was that the prophets

regarded Moses their forerunner as having revealed the law once and for all. As for the association of (p.200) with the he remarked that meant interpretation not legislation. In any event he felt, he should look into the question further.

I then took another tack. "What can be done," I asked, "to develop in the schools here the type of approach to the Bible that is represented by such interpretative studies of both the history and the inner meaning of the text?" This question seemed to rouse him. He thought at first that was necessary to interest a group of people here in an effort to introduce a new spirit into the teaching of the Bible. "To my way of thinking," I said, "it might be more advisable to attack first the problem of working out the necessary content. Once we possessed such content, it should not be difficult to interest some group in the practical effort of introducing that content into the schools." I furthermore pointed out to him that since I was going back to America, where the same problem exists, it would be highly important for the two of us to get to work on the problem of content, because in that way we might establish a cross current of influence between Jewry here and Jewry in America. The idea appealed to him very much, so that before I left him we decided to formulate a plan for such a cooperative undertaking, and to meet again about two weeks from today to discuss it.

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Tuesday, November 22, 1938

The full implication of the concept Judaism as a civilization is now beginning to dawn on me, as I have become aware more than ever that the term "nation" as applied to the Jews in the past has very little of what is connoted by that term nowadays, whereas it does have most of the elements connoted by the term "a culture" or "a civilization" (which includes the element of social unity and structure). If we were to regard the Jews as a nation, in the sense in which that term

is used nowadays, we should have to consider its habitat as exclusively Palestine, and all the rest of Jewry who no longer accept the Torah as supernatural or authoritative in a legal sense, would be left without any status. Thus there is much more involved in identifying Judaism as a civilization~~x~~ mere nomenclature. The question whether there exists any social concept that fits the case of the Jews, is really a question whether the Jews who no longer accepted the Torah in the traditional sense have anything but the common fate of persecution to serve as a common denominator. A common fate of persecution only without any common cause to render the persecution significant is bound to have a degrading effect.

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Thursday, November 24, 1938

I am at present trying to elaborate the idea that simultaneously with enabling the individual to survive, education has functioned as a means of group survival. But most writers in education fail to stress the fact that group survival has not meant the survival of mankind but always some particular cultural group. The importance of the point requires that it occupy sufficient place in the chapter to balance the account I give there of individual survival. This means a minimum of two pages of material. It is now the second day I am trying to write up that point, but without success. I am wondering whether the difficulty is due to my trying to think out the material in Hebrew, or to general incapacity. I shall therefore try to express myself in English, where I would not be troubled by the problem of dealing with such concepts as "social solidarity," "social stability" and "similarities of behavior," for which there are as yet no satisfactory equivalents in Hebrew. (I see, incidentally, that my English doesn't flow so easily either.)

The aspect of education which historically first attracts the attention and which is deliberately fostered is that which aims to integrate the individual into the group. The fact is that whatever training the individual receives in learning to meet his personal needs (the six needs being 1) health, 2) livelihood, etc.) necessitate his learning to cooperate with other individuals, and is, therefore, socializing in its effect. But there is another type of relationship into which the child must be integrated, and that is the group relationship. He must learn to be aware of the individuals he comes in contact with, not only as individuals, but as members of a group which consists not only of contemporaries, but also of ancestors and descendants, and he must learn to see all these individuals past, present and future, as members of a living organism. Of course human beings have not been able to articulate this abstract concept "organism," but they used various devices that conveyed an equivalent meaning, but what is more important, they expressed in action rather than in words this sense of the group as an organism. As for devices, the well known one of devising a common ancestry even where there was none, adopting common totems and deities, that was and still is the main function of religions, as distinct from magic - viz: fostering a sense of group organism in all the members of the group. But it is mainly in attitudes and activities that the organismic group feeling is of special import for education. Before proceeding to point out that import it is necessary to say a word about the organismic group feeling itself.

Animal genera are divided into many species, and each species among animals other than the human has many more subdivisions than the human. Kropotkin, who in his "Mutual Aid" makes the point that survival is the result not merely of struggle but of cooperation found that such cooperation obtains chiefly among the individuals of the same species,

but practically never among the species themselves. There he almost accepts struggle as the rule. When we consider human life, we find that mankind is divided into what may be regarded as sub-species, the three great races, the white, the yellow and the black, about whose physiognomic distinctions there can be no two opinions. In the past the earth was divided up as it were among these three races, and they lived on the whole so far removed from each other as to have no occasion for meeting in a struggle for existence (except perhaps the Tartar races which invaded the regions inhabited by the whites). But within each of these human sub species there has been going on a violent struggle for existence among the groups into which these sub species are divided. To overlook this inter-group struggle as the principal factor of education in the past and present is to miss its most outstanding function, and the one which has been chiefly the occasion for all its problems. It is, therefore, highly essential to comprehend the inwardness of this division into groups, how it arises and how it is fostered, if we want to come to grips with the most difficult problem in education.

Every human group consists of a number of families who act as a unit in many matters both of peace and of war. For our purpose it is not necessary to ask: what accounts for the division into families? What is significant is that the families act in ~~concert~~ concert on all important occasions and make a point of stressing their unity. In primitive conditions which still obtain in certain parts of the world these groups are comparatively small, seldom reaching 1000 individuals. They live as a rule some distance from one another, but seldom far enough to be out of the range of movement. Such movement usually caused by topological conditions brings these groups into mutual conflict. In this brief account we recognize the factors that produce both the group awareness in the mind of the members composing it, and

the group customs, laws, traditions etc. to which every individual must submit. For peace to exist among the members of the group, they must recognize certain laws of behavior. To succeed in meeting their individual needs they must resort to certain common practices, whether in hunting, or sheep raising or farming. Their behavior to be uniform must be based upon certain uniform ways of thinking and feeling. As is well known, these ways of thinking and feeling had to do with universally prevailing assumptions about being visible and invisible that had to be reckoned with, if the fundamental activities were to be carried on successfully. In all this it is apparent that the normal every day life of the group always presupposed similarities of attitude and behavior in all the members of the group. Much of that similarity would naturally arise by dint of unconscious imitation. But perhaps more would have to be the result of deliberate inculcation and enforcement of attitude and behavior, because in numerous instances the human being is prone to yield to individual desire, which is in conflict with group practice and interests. Hence education of youth aims at having them override their desires and learn to act in uniformity with group standards.

The importance of social uniformity has always been felt to be especially great from the standpoint of qualifying the group to hold its own in conflict with other groups; and such conflict was well nigh perpetual. The group which in peace time ~~had~~ developed social solidarity through successful inculcation and enforcement of uniformity had the advantage, other things being equal, over the one which lacked it. In addition, the activities of war necessitated further subordination to the will of the group, and this was accentuated in all training for war. Inasmuch as the fact of group survival is brought to the fore of consciousness mainly through preparation for conflict with other groups, all the activities of the group would be subordinated to success

in war, even those in peace time, including especially educational activities. Concretely, this means that the occasions of conflict with other groups would become foci of group consciousness, around which would be gathered the memories of triumphs, defeats and heroisms. It was this group consciousness that was articulated in song and tradition and that would be made the chief object in educating the youth.

But now come those changes in the evolution of mankind which have extended and deepened this function of education as a means of group preservation. In the past when most populations consisted of two distinct classes the conquerors and the conquered, this phase of education would be limited to the children of the conquerors class. The reason is evident. To entrust the conquered with weapons and to train them for war jeopardized the authority of the conqueror class. Not even Plato or Aristotle would permit the artisan class to be educated and to be educated meant, for the most part, to be trained to fight or to lead in war. During the Christian centuries, most of the fighting was done by the feudal aristocracy who led a few of their trusted retainers; the more powerful lords and barons would hire soldiers. There were ~~then~~ mainly mercenaries and not citizen soldiers. This is why all education which had to do with group survival was to be found chiefly in the type of education known as chivalric. For purposes of group consciousness there arose the chivalric ballads and songs like the Beowulf, the Cid etc. The Church as a group had little to fear from outside attack, and therefore it did not develop any educational activities on a large scale, for the preservation of the Church. Lacking the motive for group education, it did not educate. Only as it feared heresy and disintegration from within did it rouse itself to develop educational content with that end in view. This it did when under the lead of Thomas Aquinas it began to foster Scholasticism, and under the lead of Loyola it widened the scope of its educational effort.

With the advent of democracy and nationalism, there resulted two significant changes in the political structure of the groups engaged in mutual conflict for survival. In the first place the size of such groups has become much larger. Due to greater ease of communication and the wars at first consequent upon this fact, small groups have merged into large ones. Secondly within those enlarged groups themselves the tendency has been to abolish the distinction of conqueror and conquered, because the economic element of industrial evolution has made that distinction within the new group or nation irrelevant. Instead, the whole nation and not merely the conqueror alone has come to regard itself as a unit for all purposes of peace and war. War itself, like all other institutions has become democratized. This has meant that education for the purpose of group survival was henceforth to be imparted to all the children of the nation, regardless of all class distinctions. It could no longer be left to the discretion of the parents, but had to be made compulsory. Education for citizenship was not merely open to but obligatory upon every one, since everyone could be or had to be a citizen. And the curriculum of education was henceforth to include everything that would stimulate the youth to patriotism or willingness to make the supreme sacrifice for his nation in its struggle for existence against other nations. To this end not only has history been given a central place in the curriculum, but also geography, literature and the humanities in general, and the new subject of civics has been added.

It does seem that I can think more easily and write more fluently in English than in Hebrew. Once started I practically dashed it off in one sitting. This difficulty to use the Hebrew with adequate fluency for one like myself, who has been steeped in it all his life, though I had very limited opportunity to use it in speaking and writing

till I came here, has very serious consequences for the fostering of Jewish civilization outside Palestine. If Hebrew is to be regarded as absolutely indispensable to being a Jew, I am afraid there won't be very many Jews before long in the other parts of the world, except for the diminishing few who will hang on to Orthodoxy. (I believe I made this point once or twice before in the Journal.)

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Friday, November 25, 1938

This morning I dictated the Hebrew translation of what I wrote up yesterday in this Journal.

Last night Lena and I attended a Thanksgiving party at the Viteles. There were about 75 people present. There was a buffet dinner of which I could eat nothing, having filled myself with a good portion of matjes herring before I went there. There were games in one of the rooms. I talked with Alex, Dr. Kligler, Agronsky, Halpern and Dr. Nelson Glueck (director of American School for Archaeology).

Just as we were preparing to go to the Viteles the electric lights went out in our part of the town, and remained out for about an hour. In the midst of the celebration, the radio was turned on, and we listened to the account of Macdonald's speech in Parliament in Palestine.

The night before Lena and I went to see "Ohel" play Moliere's "L'Avare" in Hebrew. It was well acted, though personally I don't see that there is anything much to the play. If it hadn't been Moliere's it would have long been forgotten. It's little more than refined slapstick.

* * *

Saturday, November 26, 1938

Dr. Biram, the head of the Beth Sefer Reali Ivri (Hebrew Secondary School) of Haifa, wrote to me recently that his school will celebrate its 25th anniversary during the last week of December and that he wanted me to take part in the educational symposium which he was arranging in its honor. He came to see me last Thursday and I learned that it was not essential to go to Haifa for that purpose, but that I could send in the material I prepared and that it would be read at the session arranged for such papers. The problem now is what to say. I understand that the paper would have to be limited to about 20 minutes.

Taking as my cue Biram's assumption that the Jewish studies must necessarily constitute the central factor in the cultural development of the child, I wish to present the thesis that for the Jewish studies to constitute such a factor they must be capable of functioning as a means of integrating the life of the child both personally and socially. Personal integration means enabling the various elements of the inner life of the individual to fuse into responsible character and effective personality; social integration means enabling the individual to identify himself with his people in a spirit of social solidarity by reason of the self-fulfilment which such identification affords.

To fulfill this twofold function, Jewish studies must help the child attain: 1) a cosmic orientation which reckons adequately with scientific outlook and which deals with the problem of evil not by the escape method but by the method of transformation in the here and now; 2) a sense of nationhood which is free from social egoism (traditional approach) and idolatrous absolutism (modern approach); 3) acquiescence in a common code of law which is based on the ethical conception of personality.

Jewish studies are at present incapable of fulfilling these requirements, because their contents belong to a period of human development 1) when cosmic orientation did not reckon with scientific approach, and when men were satisfied with other-worldly solutions of the problem of evil, 2) when nationhood could not be contemplated except in relation to other nations as potential enemies and 3) when only the authority of the past was the criterion of the right.

Modern Jewish scholarship has done the groundwork necessary to enable Jewish studies to fulfil the above named requirements. It devolves upon Jewish educators and rabbis to build on the ground prepared by modern Jewish scholars, and to evolve Jewish content with an eye to those requirements.

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Sunday, November 27, 1938

It is so easy to think in general terms and so hard to translate them into concrete facts. The trouble with the human sciences is this "fatal facility" with which it is possible to manipulate the algebraic terminology employed in representing those general terms. Take e.g. the initial statement in the above outline: "enabling the various elements of the inner life of the individual to fuse into responsible character and effective personality." To me it isn't just verbiage. It represents a thought which I feel to be true. But it is only an algebraic thought, not an arithmetical one, so to say. The problem now is how to translate into concrete facts of experience the terms "Elements of inner life of individual," "fuse," "responsible character," and "effective personality" and to indicate their connection with the proper functioning of Jewish studies.

The psychological elements which have to be taken into account for the purpose of character and personality are the beliefs we hold about the nature of things and relationships from the standpoint of their amenability to control the ideals we cherish or the conceptions we have of human life as it ought to be, from the standpoint of the obligation which what ought to be imposes on us and the type of sentiments (in the sense used by Shand) we have been habituated into accepting as desirable. If, for example, we believe that no amount of prayer can bring rain or sunshine, we cherish the ideal of irrigation as a means of preventing suffering from drought. A fusion naturally takes place between that belief and this ideal. But we are taught that we should pray for rain and that Samuel and Elijah could bring on rain, that fusion is prevented and a gap between belief and ideal is created or, more correctly, a conflict between the two. Beliefs and ideals either fuse or clash. Where they fuse, corresponding action takes place and is repeated every time occasion arises, thus enabling the person in whom they fuse to function smoothly, thereby rendering him effective and enabling others to count upon his acting in definite fashion, which fact implies dependable character on his part. This is not the case where fusion has not taken place, because the person is liable to either be inhibited or to act now ~~in~~ on the basis of his scientific belief, now on the basis of his traditional one. The result is ineffective personality and undependable character. The sentiments as the stable systems of tendencies to action combined with other phases of the mental life cannot retain that stability, if there is lack of fusion or conflict among those other phases and if the tendencies to action are themselves disturbed by contrary habits which arise from conflicts among beliefs and ideals. Thus far personal integration.

Social integration involves recognizing which group of persons is essential to the satisfaction of our needs and the fulfillment of our own personality, and taking over the constellation of beliefs, attitudes and habits which is characteristic of that group. It is evident that this group constellation has ~~be~~ to be largely identical in content and direction with the mental life of the individual in order to enable social integration to take place. This result, however, is obstructed when instead of possessing a stable constellation of beliefs etc., the group in question is torn by conflicting beliefs, attitudes and habits. The very endeavor of the individual to identify himself with the group leads to his becoming himself the victim of conflict.

Maurice Farbridge called yesterday afternoon. I found him to be a rather likable person and one I had much in common with intellectually. He told me something about his book "Judaism and the Modern Mind" ~~which was~~ worth recording. Originally the book had a chapter on Palestine. When he handed the manuscript to Elias L. Solomon then president of the United Synagogue, the latter turned it over to Cyrus Adler. Adler approved of having the publication of the manuscript subsidized by the United Synagogue, but insisted on the elimination of the chapter on Palestine, and it was removed.

The news of Jessie Sampter's death came as a shock to me. The very fact of her having been able to hold out so long in spite of her frailty seemed to give promise of her being able to live on indefinitely, as it were. She is one of the few people who not only succeeded in overcoming her tremendous physical handicap but in actually achieving a rich and contentful life. She lived out fully and wholeheartedly what she believed in, and by her life demonstrated the validity of her faith, which is what can be said of so few. But thank God that there are some at least of whom it can be said.

Lena went with Miss Szold and Julia Dushkin to attend the funeral of Jessie Sampter at Givat Brenner. Lena marvelled at Miss Szold's vigor in first delivering a eulogy in Hebrew ~~and~~ at the grave and then addressing the group of 62 youngsters, recent German immigrants, in German, on Miss Sampter. Later Miss Szold said with a feeling of bitterness that the Hebrew language has made her dumb. She deplored the fact that she could not use the Hebrew with that same ease that she felt in the use of German nor express all that she wanted to say. It seems then that I am not the only one ~~with~~ whom the Hebrew has rendered tongue-tied, in spite of all the years put into reading and studying it.

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Tuesday, November 29, 1938

The Buber-Kaplan combination is off. It was silly of me to entertain the thought even for a moment that two of us could work together. We are worlds apart in our temperaments and ways of thinking. But I am so starved for cooperation that I followed even what I knew in my heart was a will o' the wisp. The last time I saw him, we arranged to meet next Saturday, but I didn't want to be kept in suspense unnecessarily; so I took along the first part of my commentary on Genesis, and the collection of my comments on Midrash Rabba, to illustrate to him what type of work we might collaborate on. I no sooner began to talk to him than I saw that he was trying to get out of any joint undertaking as gracefully as possible. So that's that.

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Thursday, December 1, 1938

The more I see of Buber and of his actions the less I am impressed. He is not what you call a big man. He lacks a sense of humor and displays little interest in you when you talk to him. He is interested mainly in Buber. I have heard much about his having exerted a great influence on the Jewish Youth of the Central European

countries. Yet I have not met a single person, and I say this advisedly, who waxed enthusiastic about him. In fact, to the contrary, every one who has spoken to me about him ran him down to an extent that I would feel uncomfortable at hearing an outstanding Jewish personality so disparaged.

With all my desire to be charitable, I cannot but find such a program as he has drawn up for his courses at the University on the philosophy of society, which he identifies with sociology, quite charlatanish. The idea of a man treating under distinct headings the sociology of religion, the sociology of custom and ethics, the sociology of art and literature, the sociology of science and technology, and the sociology of education, and omitting all consideration of economics, law and politics as if these matters had nothing to do with society. This constitutes his program for a three year course in sociology and this is what the Senate passed yesterday as one of the courses that is to be recognized as a minor, whereas with all the theoretic material that enters into the pedagogic training, it has pleased the Senate to refuse last year to recognize ~~pedagogy~~ pedagogy as one of the minors that a student might choose for his degree, after they voted two years ago to accord it such recognition.

When I translated into Hebrew the few ideas I worked out about the prerequisites to Jewish studies occupying a central place in the curriculum (see pp.172-175 this typescript) I realized that my ideas on the subject were still too algebraic and that I did not reckon sufficiently with the realities. In the first place, the matter of personal integration should be illustrated by means of conflicting views, values and practices which the educand is usually required to accept. The conflicting ideas about the effect of rain illustrates the first of these. The point about conflicting values should be illustrated by the

confusion between this-worldliness and otherworldliness in our present attempts to evaluate the worthwhile elements in life. The conflict in practices may be illustrated by our applying democratic standards in political life and absolutist standards in social life, as when Jewish law refuses to recognize the woman as a full fledged person.

But it is particularly the matter of social integration that I left at loose ends. I failed to reckon with the fact that it is impossible to expect any people nowadays to be completely like-minded and homogeneous. Hence the problem of social integration must be solved in such a way as to enable the individual on the one hand to have some group within his people, with which he is practically at one on all questions of principle and practice, and on the other, to find enough in common with all other groups within his people to make him feel at one with the whole of it. It is impossible to educate children satisfactorily unless we recognize two degrees of like-mindedness as in need of being aimed at, likemindedness with a sizable group within the nation, which should cover as nearly as possible the whole area of life and thought, and a likemindedness which should not be expected to be any more than partial. The acceptance of two degrees of likemindedness as a requisite to social integration is the essential principle of democracy. It is entirely a new thing in the life of nations, and will take a long time to work out in educational terms. The political terms in which that principle is practiced at present, lacking as they do the educational and economic applications, are bound to remain formal and abstract. The Mizrahi and the Workers schools are pedagogically right in insisting upon their pupils being taught a style of life that their respective groups believe in whole-heartedly, but they are wrong in failing to indicate with equal emphasis the elements which unite the various groups into a people. In making Jewish studies central, the schools should utilize those studies in such a way as to develop simultaneously these

two types of like-mindedness. Otherwise there is no reason why they should be central. In fact they can only be a source of mischief. It is in this spirit that I suggest the three principles of interpretation to be applied to Jewish subject matter. (pp.173 typescript).

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Friday, December 2, 1938

Those principles, as they stand, provide for complete like-mindedness with only a group within Jewish life, but they also leave room for partial like-mindedness with the whole Jewish people. As they stand they formulate the attitude to be cultivated toward the present. It is upon them that all policies of collective action will have to be based, as far as the particular group that subscribes to those principles is concerned. But they do not preclude -- in fact they rather invite -- the objective consideration of the Jewish consciousness as it existed in the past and the adoption of it as the background of whatever we choose to regard as the norm of Jewish consciousness in the present. Not the Jewish past as such can serve as the common background of the various types of Jewish consciousness in the present, but the past Jewish consciousness. We cannot agree on what actually the Jewish past, especially during Bible times, was like. Those who subscribe to higher criticism have a radically different view of it from the traditionalists. But there can be no difference of opinion as to what on the whole united Jews from the standpoint of belief and practice since the time of Ezra to our own day. By presenting these past contents of the Jewish consciousness, in the first place as past contents and secondly, as sympathetically as possible, Jewish education can meet the requirement of developing in the educand the partial like-mindedness with the whole of his people.

Just what is involved in presenting them sympathetically? To get culturally and spiritually the most out of the thought content of

the past, it is necessary to approach it with a finely developed historical sense. The adage "Do not judge thy neighbor, until thou has put thyself in his place," applies especially to our opinions about the past. It requires considerable training to dissociate ourselves mentally from the customary thought habits of the present. This ability, which amounts almost to the acquisition of a new sense, is a very recent achievement in human culture. Educationally this ability is hardly capable of being acquired before a person has attained full maturity, and the training in it cannot even be begun before adolescence. But whereas the possession of it may be optional in other civilizations, it is absolutely indispensable to Jewish civilization, because without it Jews who hold different philosophies of life cannot achieve like-mindedness and homogeneity.

Presenting and judging past thought content sympathetically by no means always involves straining the quality of forgiveness on our part, or for that matter ever call for a patronizing attitude. There is still much that the past beliefs and attitudes can teach, if not always in what they expressed at least generally in what they implied or were trying to express. Here is where the art of modern creative interpretation is in place. The archaeologist performs an indispensable function in reconstructing the past, taking care to give it its proper setting and atmosphere. But it is the virtuoso approach applied to the past that can bring out some of the finest strains that were latent in it, and that only subsequent experience has helped identify and bring to the surface.

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Sunday, December 4, 1938

Yesterday morning we got a telegram from Ira telling us the good news that Judy gave birth to a girl weighing six pounds eight. May God bless them.

Last week (Nov. 29) we got a telegram from Selma telling us she finally received her M.A. This has been one of our happiest weeks since we have been here.

Last night I took part in a type of meeting which I have become accustomed to in America. It was called by Joseph Bentwich at his home for the purpose of seeing what can be done to reconstruct our Jewish religious life. He had come to see me twice during last week to consult with me about the people to be invited and the problems to be taken up. Those present were Blum (of the (p.211)). Drs. E. Rieger, Alex Dushkin, Herlig, F. Simon, Prof. Roth, Alan, Dr. Ben-Zeev and myself.

After the introductory talk by Bentwich each one of us had his say. Blum was for starting a Jewish Protestant movement, Herlig and Simon dwelt upon the ugliness and absurdities which mark Jewish practice as regulated by the rabbinate in this country -- such as the marriage and burial rites, the administration of inheritance laws, etc. the fiction of selling the fields to the Arabs in order to get around the law of Shemithah. This last was carried out by the authorities of the Keren Kogemet at the behest of the rabbinate. Roth, as is usual with him, belittled the effort as a whole and saw its value only insofar as it afforded an opportunity for theological "discussions, and in seeing what can be done with the question of religion in the schools. The one who contributed most to the discussion was Dushkin. He emphasized the fact 1) that it was not a question of formulating abstract truths but of ^{meeting} ~~creating~~ concrete wants, 2) that the main problem was with the parents and adults generally, and 3) that the way to begin was by instituting the practice of devoting every Sabbath morning to the consideration of the entire problem, such consideration to be itself treated as Torah and a form of religious exercise.

I am now tackling the problem of the relation of the state to education. The various discussions I read, including E. Spranger's elaborate paper "Die wissenschaftlichen Grundlogien der Schulverfassungslehre und Schulpolitik," fail to recognize the fact that education has inherently been bi-focal, that is that it has revolved about the two foci of family and community. In primitive communities, or in a civilization like the ancient Chinese, which retained the essential traits of primitivism, the two foci, family and community were about equal in their potency. Thus in those communities there existed a state of equilibrium, which, while conducive to stability prevented progress, since progress is the result of the disturbance of equilibrium and of the effort to regain it. The regained equilibrium is never the same as the one that had been lost. Concretely how this works out in the contest between the family and the community will appear in the sequel.

It must be remembered that while both family and community are the outcome of natural human needs, they owe their origin to different types of needs. The family owes its origin to the two fundamental needs of sex and food; the community owes its origin to the need of safety from attack by other groups. It is for that essentially that families unite to form the larger social units. This initial cause of the community's existence makes itself felt throughout the various stages of the community's development, and determines that development to such an extent that so far the only kind of community man has been able to establish has been the one which is dominated by the war motif. The motif of peace or welfare goes hand in hand with the family type of organization, but not with the community type. This fact it is that complicates man's efforts to base his social life on peace and cooperation.

With the amalgamation of families into tribes and more so with the federations of tribes into nations, the human being, and for a long time chiefly the man, must function both as the provider of family needs and as warrior for the community. This enlarges the scope of his activity and gives rise to the vast complex of interests, values, habits and beliefs which constitute the community consciousness. And when the deadly game of war is started, and life comes to mean being forever in danger of attack from without, there seems nought left but to impress every bit of energy and every possible opportunity into the service of the community, which now stands between each family and destruction. More and more the families recognize how much they depend upon the community, and when their interests conflict with those of the community as a whole, they prefer to yield than to be left without the community's protection. But in spite of danger from without which is ever present practically in all stages of human existence, the family manages to hold a place of authority almost equal to that of the community, and at times even greater. This is the case because the periods of respite for most ancient peoples were on the whole fairly long. Such was the situation, for example in China. Hence the part played there by the institution of the family, as the chief mentor and authority in the life of its peoples.

The case, however, was radically different among populations where war was almost a daily necessity. In Greece and Rome fighting enemies was as necessary as obtaining food. It is among them therefore that the community begins to take precedence over the family, and the nation of the state as the principal factor in the life of the individual begins to take shape. Sparta, which kept in subjection an overwhelming majority who might at any moment massacre all her citizens, had to go to the limit of militarization, and to ~~do~~ that end take control of every child, both male and female, from the day of its birth. The

family's rights over the child had to be waved. ~~And~~ Athens, not so precariously placed could afford to allow the family greater leeway with its children. Rome, whose citizens spent perhaps more time on the battle fields than at their homes, made further inroads into the family institution and recognized chiefly citizens, not families. No wonder all the philosophers of those days who were struggling with the question of the prerogatives of the state could not withhold their admiration ~~for~~ from Sparta whose half communized way of life came nearest to giving the state full control over the individual, and wresting him completely from the control of the family. Plato in his admiration merely carried the thing to its logical consequence, and advocated the complete dissolution of the family. Such was bound to be the outcome of the acceptance of the community as having for its chief raison d'etre the carrying on of successful war against external enemies.

An entirely different function was ascribed to the community when Christianity arose. The enemy to be fought was not the one who wanted my possessions and to destroy my body, but Satan and his cohorts who were bent upon destroying my soul. Devotion to family and preoccupation with its interests was, if anything, one of the chief means which Satan employed to attain his purpose with human beings. They were meant to have life immortal and the family interests only contributed to man's steeping himself in mortality. If the family was intent upon promoting the immortality and eternal welfare of its members, it should unite with all other families in forming the only worthwhile community, the community of believers or the Church. The Church too came to treat the family as deserving only a secondary place in the allegiance of the individual and as at best only a necessary evil. Like Plato it carried this attitude to the logical conclusion when it advocated celibacy or being wedded to the Church as by far holier than earthly marriage. This attitude too meant the dissolution of the family as an ideal.

Educ ationally the Church took the same position as the early Graeco-Roman state. It claimed the right to educate the child, for education meant to it what it meant to all communities integrating the individual unto itself and making him serve its ends. As the state was interested in training soldiers to fight its battles against other states and principalities, so was the church interested in training Christian soldiers or priests to fight its battles against Satan and his cohorts, and rescuing human beings from his power. When Rome became Christian a peculiar situation arose, which has not been altogether cleared up to this day. Two types of community set themselves up vis a vis the family as its rivals for the right to educate the child, the state and the church. Fortunately for the latter, the state was for a long time in abeyance. That left the whole field of the community side of life to the church. But the picture began to change toward the latter part of the 14th century and by the beginning of the 16th the modern European state began to emerge. It could not forthwith eliminate the church, which had held the ground for many centuries. But it began the process of wearing out the church by attrition, reducing its function gradually until by this time the church is practically defunct educationally. It is interesting to note that tactics the church employs now in its last struggles to hold its own against the state. Those tactics consist chiefly in becoming sponsor for the family as sole possessing the ~~six~~ divine right over the education of the child and in representing itself as acting for the family in resisting the state's educational prerogative over the child.

When the modern state began to take shape, it was not fully aware of what it was after. It was not always fortunate in its spokesman as it was in Machiavelli. For the most part its spokesmen knew more clearly what they did not want than what they did. They knew that the church regime was unsatisfactory and must give way to a worldly or

secular regime. But they pleaded for the most part, not in the name of any new regime, but in the name of the individual, the new human being. Such was the trend of the renaissance of the 15th century, of the humanism of the 17th century, and of the enlightenment of the 18th century. But in reality all this individualism was merely breaking up the church polity and paving the way for the state polity. The true nature of the modern state polity began to be unmistakable, when Napoleon became dictator and helped to crystallize in France and by reaction in all the countries he attacked the modern nationalist state. In this modern nationalist state the essential character of the community, as a belligerent unit and as a formidable rival of the family in claiming the right to educate the child with its belligerent purposes in view, is reasserting itself with unprecedented authority and physical force to back it.

The foregoing development has been very much accelerated, if not altogether made possible by the industrial revolution. A far greater impact has been administered to the family than could be administered by any political force, when the machine came into being and made necessary the division of labor which has taken away from the family its age-old function as a producing unit and converted it mainly into a consuming unit. As the latter its size has been reduced tremendously, leaving it to consist of parents and children only, and even these modern industry, with its ever widening differentiation is scattering to all the winds. This same industrial revolution which is disintegrating the family has been adding new functions to the state which is becoming ever more indispensable to the life of human beings, this time in peace pursuits no less than for purposes of defense against attack. Modern facilities for communication have so far only bound the interests of peace even more closely to the interests of success in war, with the result that the state's prerogatives over the child and his education are almost undisputed.

Tuesday, December 6, 1938

Among the chief effects of industrial development on the state has been the inclusion of the masses within the governing structure of the state instead of being merely in the governed part. In fact there has been considerable merging of governing and governed. This has come about as a result of the necessity of the state to interfere in the running of the industrial process because of the ~~abuses~~ abuses to which the latter exposed the masses of the people. To put the matter more correctly the state has been compelled to include those who represented the masses, or at least a goodly portion of them. These have forced the state to reckon in its legislation with the welfare of the masses. Next to health and sanitary regulations, education of the masses has been dealt with as the principal means to their welfare. Thus has the state taken over the responsibility for either itself conducting the education of the people, or at least regulating it entirely, and seeing to it that as far as possible every child be given an opportunity to acquire the education that will best fit him for life. This opportunity is to be accorded to all children irrespective of economic status. In this capacity the state in the role of an educating agency acts in behalf of the welfare of all its citizens, and counteracts the disabilities due to poverty. To that extent the ~~xxxxxxxx~~ state is assumedly a counter influence to class differences.

By the same token that the industrial revolution enlarged the function of the state and compelled the inclusion of the masses within its governing structure, it has focussed men's attention upon this worldly interests. It has opened up infinite possibilities of achievement, enjoyment and leisure to the masses never dreamt of before. These possibilities have raised numerous problems. The question which will no longer be downed is how those possibilities may best be realized?

On the other hand new social and political complications have likewise arisen and attendant ~~and~~ dangers galore. All these problems have to be met. Thus matters of immediate moment have become preoccupying, crowding out all speculations about other worldly affairs. Consequently the church as a community based on a common interest in otherworldly salvation has of necessity had to recede into the background. The state in democratic countries not wishing to enter into open conflict with the church has devised the compromise of assumedly omitting from its education the instruction that has a direct bearing on the conception of salvation and human destiny, and assigning that instruction to the church or churches, thus taking as it were all this-worldly affairs and leaving other-worldly affairs to the ecclesiastical organizations. Needless to say this is an unworkable compromise and has proved unsatisfactory both to state and to church. The totalitarian states are dealing more drastically with the problem by either suppressing the church entirely or allowing it a very perfunctory part in which is really state education. This solution on the other hand cannot be acceptable from the standpoint of democracy.

We must not assume, however, that because the state has come to be in all instances responsible for the education of the youth, and in some instances to monopolize it completely, that the needs and traits of the individual as such are completely disregarded. On the contrary the one thing that those who wish to wield power have learned is that to whatever end they want to direct or use the masses, they must reckon with the needs and the psychology of the individual. It is therefore to be expected that totalitarian states would resort to the most advanced educational methods that have been achieved in progressive schools in democratic countries and perhaps carry them out more generally and more effectively than is possible in the democratic countries themselves.

Wednesday, December 7, 1938

Every time I read a newspaper or a piece of contemporary writing my whole frame is shaken by the mental torture of the awareness that the whole world is closing in on us Jews. The world has become like in a den of wild beasts ready to spring on us and tear us to shreds.

In today's Palestine Post there is a quotation/^{from} ~~an~~ a letter sent to the London Times by a group of Christian missionaries who have lived and worked here. With a heartlessness and cold blooded disregard of our legitimate claims to Palestine and of our tragic situation in Europe, these sanctimonious gentlemen proceed to intercede in behalf of the "oppressed" Arabs and to recommend amnesty for the leaders of the rebels. The fact that the rebels have compelled the majority of Arab notables to flee the country is turned into a specious argument for treating with those rebels before they lay down arms. It takes a certain kind of Englishmen who come to these parts to earn their livelihood and who combine in themselves the worst elements present in the English makeup - snobbery and stupidity - to concoct such proposals.

Only an hour before this bit of unpleasantry came to my attention I got a shock when in the course of paging through a delightfully humorous little book "With Malice Toward Some," I came across an incidental reference to the existence of a considerable Nazi group in Sweden, and the statement that in the next war Sweden will fight on the side of Germany.

But what are these pinpricks to the mental agonies one experiences when one's thoughts revert to the harrowing news from Germany and Austria, and to the systematic efforts of Italy and Germany to provoke war.

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Thursday, December 8, 1938

1) The first of the three requirements (see p.172) which Jewish studies must meet in order to qualify for centrality in the school curriculum is the ability to help the educand achieve a cosmic orientation. No education fulfils its function if it fails to enable the child to orient himself cosmically. The need for cosmic orientation is to the human being just as natural as are the needs for health and sustenance. With his extraordinary capacity of memory, imagination and reason, man actually lives in an environment that infinitely exceeds in space and time the one he exists in physically. The range of his sensitiveness exposes him to suffering from all manner of calculable to incalculable evils. He is therefore all too easily upset, and all too readily feels himself lost in the windy vastness of his thought world and is accordingly in need of a compass as it were, to help him regain and retain his bearings. Comparing life as he finds it with life as he would like it to be he has sufficient reason to become discouraged. But if he is to go on living without being weighted down by a sense of frustration and despair, he must have some reservoir of faith to draw upon. To that end his education must be so directed that when fears and disappointments begin coming, he is well prepared to meet them. Say what one will about the traditional education, it was just this need that it seemed to fulfil more so than any other. To be sure it was much easier to meet this need in the past, because man's cosmos was comparatively small and simple with the one which he mentally inhabits now, and he was far less critical than he is now of the consolations offered him.

Nevertheless in spite of the difficulty involved, education must not shirk its task of helping the educand orient himself. In fact, just that should be the main function of the central studies.

But the question is how can Jewish studies, the contents of which arose at a time when the thought world or universe of discourse was radically different from what it is now, help the Jewish child orient himself in the new thought world of universe of discourse? It is important that we do not delude ourselves as to the extent to which these two universes differ from each other. In addition to all the changes effected by the sciences like astronomy, physics, biology and psychology which have transformed the very meaning of our physical environment there is the complete change of center from the other world to this world as the stage of man's self-realization with all that such change implies in our moral and religious life. The only way in which Jewish studies can contribute to the cosmic orientation of the educand is by evolving a method of interpretation that will take all these facts into account and by making that interpretation as much an integral part of Jewish knowledge as the interpretation given to the biblical tradition constituted an integral part of Jewish knowledge during the rabbinic period.

2) The second requirement is that of inculcating a sense of nationhood which is free from the objectionable elements which marked it in the past and which mark it in the present. It is evident that ~~this~~ the principal purpose of giving the central position to Jewish can be only the inculcation of a Jewish national consciousness. This raises the question: what kind of national consciousness? i.e. what is to be the conception of the Jewish nation vis a vis the other nations? The answer implied in all of traditional lore is unmistakably that the Jews constitute an altogether unique kind of nation in no way to be compared with the other nations. This is the case because it was assumed that we stood in closer relationship to God than any other nation as attested by our exclusive possession of God's law for man. Implied in national consciousness is a sense of national destiny. Here again the question arises: How is this destiny to be conceived? And again the reply of

tradition is plainly to the effect that Israel's destined to be the supreme people in the world. Neither teaching of ~~xxx~~ tradition is compatible with a modern orientation. It is possible to soften the harshness of national egotism implied in the traditional conception of national destiny by the process of interpretation which would set that attitude against the ancient background, and which would draw inferences that point rather to a sense of national responsibility than to that of national variety. But the fact remains that outside of a very limited number of passages in the prophetic writings, the preeminence of Israel's destiny as conceived generally in traditional Jewish lore, and above all in rabbinic writings, is of such character that no amount of reinterpretation can render it compatible with ethical nationalism as we now understand it.

This fact leads me to conclude that when it comes to the matter of Jewish nationalism traditional Jewish subject matter cannot by itself occupy a central position in the curriculum unless it is to be supplemented by material taken from modern social sciences, which would set forth the history of nationalism, the moral and ~~spiritual~~ spiritual factors which render nationhood, indispensable, and the moral and spiritual dangers to which it is subject and against which we Jews must especially be on our guard. There can be no question that we Jews have contributed the constellation of ideas which has helped nationalism to develop wherever the economic and political circumstances favored it. The modern nations learned what nationhood is by imagining themselves for a long time that they were in direct line with Israel of the Scriptures. By being instrumental in fostering nationhood in the rest of the world, we may have rendered mankind a service; but for the present the aspect of disservice outstrips that of service. It is in the name of nationhood that certain nations now carry on like beasts of the jungle and we Jews are their most hard beset victims. This fact imposes upon

us the logical responsibility of making a close study of nationhood with a view to drawing the danger line in order to indicate just where and when nationhood ceases to be a good and becomes a menace. This calls for new subject matter on the entire problem of nationhood. Without the new subject matter, it is not possible to see the traditional subject matter in the proper light, from the standpoint of its teachings concerning nationhood and national destiny.

3) The third requirement is that it inculcates acquiescence in a code of law which is based on the ethical conception of personality. A common national consciousness and a sense of common destiny are empty phrases unless they include acquiescence in a national code of law of some kind, which is recognized as authoritative and which is actually operative. This means that there is no use of trying to inculcate a national consciousness so long as nationhood has nothing of its appurtenances of statehood. The essence of statehood is a functioning code of law. There was accordingly more real nationhood in the pre-emancipation era than there is in Palestine today. Language, literature and even a common past are not sufficient to evoke that sense of identity with one's people which is implied in the term nationhood. They are indispensable, but not sufficient. A civil code of law goes much further than they do, and therefore even more indispensable than they are.

But, it will be said, this lies outside the field of the educator. That is true, if he conceives his calling so narrowly as not to think of it in terms of conditions which affect it, and excludes from his consideration social problems, though they have a direct bearing on ^{the work} ~~the work~~ of the school. If, however, he is socially minded, he considers it his duty to take an active part in removing social evils which prevent him from properly fulfilling his function as educator. If accordingly he is convinced that the character development and the inner and outer integration of the child necessitate his being given

a sense of nationhood, he cannot but assume the responsibility for giving effect to that necessity by seeing to it that the main condition to nationhood be fulfilled. That main condition is undoubtedly the indispensable element of stateness as expressed in an authoritative law code. No Jewish teacher can at present regard himself as doing his duty in respect to the inculcation of Jewish nationhood, unless he agitate for the codification of Jewish civil law. Since in this whole argument we assume that we are dealing with teachers and educators who are intent upon adjusting the child to modern life, the civil law for which they must agitate should not be other than that based on the ethical ~~conception~~ conception of personality and on the conception of justice in which human happiness rather than precedent is the criterion.

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Friday, December 9, 1938

This morning I took part in the Faculty meeting (p.220)

After an interruption of about half a year the discussion was resumed today of the proposed reorganization of the courses in the Humanities. In contrast with the completely haphazard character of those discussions last year they are beginning to assume definite form. The issue which is beginning to emerge out of the multitude of words is whether or not to improve the present practice (of granting the B.A. after a four or five year attendance of any chance grouping of courses which are divided into one major group and two minors) by a palliative measures or by a radical measure. The palliative measure would grant a B.A. to students at the end of the third year, and an M.A. at the end of the fourth year. That is the suggestion, in the main, of the Committee on Instruction () on which it had worked for over a year. The radical measure which is contained in Magnes' and in Dushkin's and my memorandum presented last year called for a completely

different emphasis in the B.A. courses from the one in the courses leading to the M.A. During the first three years the emphasis should be on developing in the student a general knowledge of basic subject matter (or "allgemeine Sildung). This calls for a number of required subjects and a number of electives in making up the schedule of studies for each student. If after the successful conclusion of the three year course leading to the B.A. the student is interested in pursuing further one of those electives as major and two others as minors he should be able to continue his studies for two more years and after having done satisfactory work in them get his M.A.

The question, which of the above alternatives is the preferable one, depends upon the following: First: Will the needs of the growing number of students at the University be better served by giving them a general knowledge rather than specialized knowledge? And secondly, Is the University prepared in the number and kind of personnel it has at present to provide courses leading to general knowledge, in case that is found to meet the needs of the student body? The fact seems to be that the University is far from being prepared in that regard. So I suppose the matter will resolve itself to a continuation of the present type of teaching to which the members of the Faculty have been accustomed during all their academic career, and everything will remain pretty much as it was. The scholarly interests of University teachers, their ambition to publish the results of their studies and the general tendency to confer academic prestige on those who publish the most -- all this is bound to compete with the individual attention that has to be given to students if their intellectual development is to be the chief purpose of the University.

So much for the extrernal aspect of the problem. To get, however, to the bottom of it, it is necessary to have a clearer notion of just what is meant by "general culture" or "general knowledge." Leon Roth in the course of today's discussion defined it as the ability to read and write, and as for the ability to think, that, he definitely intimated, lies outside the field of general culture. Therein he voiced the same notion of culture as Hutchins. What they really want to say is that culture consists in the appreciative assimilation of the classics in their own terms, whereas "thinking" which they regard as something that only the few can or should do consists for them in extending the ideas of the classics to contemporary needs and situations. This ~~xxx~~ view is the typically conservative one of the Oxford don. It has held sway in England, because it governed the education of the ruling class. By dint of the usual fallacy of "post hoc, ergo propter hoc" it was regarded as qualifying the ruling class to function well as rulers. What it really did ~~was~~ to help in the selection of those qualified to rule, but not in qualifying them to rule. If it contributed anything to the way they discharged their function, I should say, it made for the policy of bungling and empirical self-adjustment to each situation as it arose, which in the past was perhaps the best way to rule.

But actually what is general culture, if it isn't what English snobs and their American disciples think it is? I believe that Whitehead is right in identifying it with "the art of the utilization of knowledge." (He defines Education as "the acquisition of that art" -- "The Aims of Education" p. 6). It is the art of seeing far reaching implications in facts and ideas. This does not mean that this art is to be applied to all forms of study. It has its limitations in that it prevents systematized and intensive observation and study of particular facts. In research work it is better not to practice that art.

This indicates where to draw the line between courses leading to B.A. and courses leading to M.A. The former must be cultural in character, while the latter should be of the research type. It is well to recognize, however, that seldom can the same teachers engage with equal success in these two types of teaching. From a practical standpoint, therefore it is doubtful whether the University here with its limited funds could introduce the cultural type of courses, though there can be no question that they are extremely desirable.

Lena and I have been in the habit of going over Friday nights to the Dushkins. When there are no guests there, the Dushkins and I often develop a very stimulating discussion. This was the case tonight. It made clear to me that ^{what} ~~xxxx~~ I was attempting to do with the Jewish tradition was to isolate the wholesome elements in it and to use them as a solvent of the deleterious elements which that tradition has evolved. There is no such thing as starting human life from scratch. When we are under the illusion that we do so, all the follies and errors that we think we left behind gradually work their way back under new names and guises.

* * *

Saturday, December 10, 1938

Thursday night I called on Dr. Senator at his invitation. He wanted to know whether I had definitely made up my mind to return to the States and whether I still abode by the suggestion I had made to him several weeks ago that I would be willing to come to the University every other year for the summer semester which begins after Pesach to deliver a course of lectures (about 40 to 50 hours) on the principles of education, if the matter could be arranged between the University and the Seminary. I replied in the affirmative to both questions.

The hair raising atrocities which are being perpetrated these days on the German Jews render life for the thinking Jew a horrible nightmare. That human beings should be capable of thinking up such diabolic schemes of subjecting their fellow beings to such unspeakable tortures is sufficient to rob life of all meaning. The most tragic outcome of all this is to me symbolized by the fact that music has had its spiritual valency belied. If a people so musically gifted as are the Germans can act so fiendishly, then music must be one of Satan's inventions to beguile man into believing himself a god and into behaving as no swine at its worst could behave.

In yesterday's Davar there appeared a criticism of my (p.223). The main point he makes is that what I do to Jewish values is not to reevaluate but to transvaluate them, and that I arbitrarily identify my conception of God as religious. He takes strong exception to the principle I lay down that religion must be not only self-consistent but also consistent with the rest of one's thinking. That, he says, is to destroy the unique character of religion, which according to him is nothing if not transcendent to human experience. This is how these negativists argue, as a rule, because it affords them a valid excuse for having nothing to do with religion. I am reminded of what the Apikorsim says is the meaning of exalt. The Apikorsim purposely exalt God and declare Him as too transcendent to bother about man, he says, in order that they might justify their refusing to worship Him or to obey His laws.

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Sunday, December 11, 1938

The group that met Saturday night, Dec. 4 (see p.181 typescript) met again last night. Roth and Rieger were absent. Blum read a statement that he had worked out explaining what he understood by the refor-

mation of Judaism. It was too general and inclusive to permit discussion. There was more talk in line with Dushkin's suggestion. Finally we decided to hold weekly meetings on Sabbath mornings and to devote those meetings to the discussion of the various problems involved in the reformation of Judaism. I was asked to work out together with Berthach and Alon a schedule of the problems to be discussed, and to be prepared to discuss whatever I considered proper as a beginner. After thinking the matter over I decided to use as a basis for discussion the creed as formulated by Albo and to point out how each of the three doctrines he regards as fundamental and indispensable may be reinterpreted in accordance with a modern world outlook. The doctrine of the existence of God has to be interpreted in terms of the worthwhileness of life and holiness as the supreme value; the doctrine of reward and punishment must be translated from otherworldly to this worldly terms; and the Torah as supernatural revelation must be equated with the high worth of national civilization.

It is generally agreed that the upbuilding of Jewish Palestine is in vain unless it is accompanied by the revival of the Jewish spirit. There are different views however as to what is meant by the revival of the Jewish spirit. Our conception of it depends upon how we regard the traditional way of life. If we are satisfied with it, then all that is necessary is to recall our people to its ancient path. This is what the Mizrahi is attempting to do. But if we are not satisfied with the traditional way of life, then we are confronted with the much more difficult task of constructing a new road.

Why are we not satisfied with the old Jewish way of life? Because it is out of harmony with the rest of our thinking in scientific historical and comparative terms, because it conflicts with our sense of right and wrong, and because it obstructs the free and many-sided

development of human creative ability. We are therefore determined to construct a new way of life that will remove all these obstacles. We want it to be a Jewish way of life, and as such will lie on the same roadbed as the traditional one, but it will have to be viable to the greater traffic of ideas and aspirations than was necessary in the past.

Since it is our purpose to reconstruct Judaism or the Jewish way of life, it is essential that we learn to understand it as a whole before we undertake to deal with any part of it. What each part signifies and the function we believe it can or should fulfill depends upon what Judaism as a whole means to us. This precaution must be kept in mind, because as a result of confused thinking which prevails at the present time -- a confusion brought on chiefly by crowded historical changes which few people have had a chance to appraise correctly -- there have arisen false categories and classifications in the apprehensions of social facts, and this confusion has been carried over to the interpretation of Jewish social facts. The outstanding illustration is the concept of religion, and the category "religious group." That religion has been integral to the Jewish way of life is self-evident. But just how far it is integral it is difficult to say. Is it integral to the point of identity with the whole of Judaism, or is it a distinguishable though indispensable part? Or, may it not have been indispensable in the past and yet dispensable in the future? It is difficult to answer these questions because the very concept of religion as a distinguishable element in the way of life of a people is a modern invention. It has come into being as a result of the struggle of the modern nations against the Church. With the refusal of the Church to surrender its prerogative as a governing power, a compromise has been effected. A division has been introduced into the collective way of life. Hence the division between the secular and the religious, with the state to take charge of the first area and the Church to govern the second area.

It was this division between the secular and the religious that affected Jewish life in two ways. In the first place, it cleared the way for the Emancipation. Since it was possible to conceive the secular and the religious aspects of collective life as distinct, one might be a citizen by identifying himself completely with its secular interests, though he might belong to a religious minority. Secondly, the Jews themselves wishing to prove their right to citizenship further emphasized that distinction by surrendering their Jewish nationhood and all hopes of restoration to Palestine, and avowing themselves a religious group.

The compromise between state and church, which turned upon treating religion as a distinguishable element from the rest of the way of life, has by no means been successful. In totalitarian countries, the Catholics still maintain the doctrine of church supremacy and refuse to recognize the compromise, while the Protestants are dissatisfied with the results of the compromise because religion as they see it is reduced to a very formal and secondary affair. What is to be our attitude here in Palestine, where we are permitted a considerable measure of autonomy? The question this time is not directed therefore toward our relation to non-Jews, but toward our own life as a community. Its answer, to be true to the realities of group life, must be based upon a true understanding of the essential character of the Jewish way of life in the past, and what are the basic needs of human nature, which must be taken into account in formulating plans for the future.

For the understanding of the Jewish way of life in the past, it is necessary to remove an error that has crept into all our thinking about it, as a result of a mistranslation of ^{the} crucial terms (P.225)

"dat", by which that way of life is designated in medieval Jewish writings. That term is equated with religion, as

popularly understood nowadays, namely as an element distinguishable from a collective way of life. Hence Jews have naturally fallen into the error of regarding their way of life as capable of being split up into religious and secular elements and to argue on the basis of that dichotomy, outside Palestine, that they constitute a religious group only, and in Palestine that they can be Jews without Jewish religion. The fact however is that (p.225) as and in medieval writings means the way of life in its entirety, and cannot be taken to refer to only one aspect of it. Religion in the modern sense, which is a compromise product of a historical accident, would have been nonsense to the medievalists whether Jewish or Gentile, a kind of logical surd. Take, for example, Albo's philosophy of which Judaism ~~which~~ he treats as (p.226). But what does he understand by that term? "The term 'dat,'" he says, "applies to every rule or custom in vogue among a large group of people, or it may be a body of rules embracing a great many commands." (Ikarim I,7). "There are three kinds of 'dat'" he goes on to say, "natural, conventional and divine." (ibid) To come nearest to what was formerly conveyed by speaking of Judaism as 'dat' we should translate that term as a "civilization." We shall then appreciate more fully the significance of the classification of into natural, conventional and divine, which was common in medieval thinking. (Cf. e.g. Thomas Aquinas' "Lex aeterna" "lex naturalis," "lex humana" and "lex divine." The medievalists had no special concept for a particular civilization of a people. They used the term "lex" or "dat" i.e. "law" to express what they had in mind, because to them law was the essential element in a particular civilization.~~of~~ They had the notion that civilizations were systems of law, and capable of being codified by individual lawgivers.

What Albo meant by the above classification, and how he conceived Judaism become clearer, if we translate the term as "a civilization" or a "collective way of life." There are three kinds of civilizations, namely 1) natural, i.e. the kind of civilization which is common to all peoples at all times and in all places (the existence of which was first assumed by the Stoics and became the basis of their "lex naturalis"), 2) artificial, the kind "which is deliberately instituted by a wiser man or men to suit the place and the time and the nature of the persons who are controlled by it;" and 3) a divine civilization. Instead of a wise man codifying the civilization, it is God Himself who does it, with some prophet to convey it to men. This is the kind of civilization which purposes "to guide men to obtain true happiness which is spiritual happiness and immortality." (I7)

This classification renders the term "religion" in the modern sense entirely superfluous. According to it Judaism is not a religion but a divine or supernaturally revealed code, a way of life or a civilization while the codes, ways of life or civilizations of other peoples are either natural, artificial or allegedly divine civilizations. But what is by far more important is that it helps us see our problem much more simply than it is possible once it becomes complicated with the concept religion. For those of us whose mental outlook has been fashioned by naturalism and humanism and to whom all civilizations, our own included, are of the same natural human quality, a civilization which enables those who live by it to achieve salvation or self-fulfilment is a manifestation of the divine in human life. The problem accordingly is a twofold one: first, is it possible to formulate the desiderata which our ancestors were endeavoring to express as essential to a true (or divine) civilization, and to select from among those desiderata some which should be

emphasized anew? Secondly, how to modify that civilization so as to maintain its continuity, while adapting it to our highest needs today? I shall here attempt to deal with the first question only. If answered satisfactorily, it would, no doubt, smooth the way for the answer to the second question.

The attempt to get behind an ancient text, or complex of ideas, in order to arrive at an understanding of what universal human wants were trying to make themselves articulate is to engage in the type of creative interpretation which enables us to discover the elements common to the authors of that text, or idea complex, and to us. It is thus that we achieve a sense of desirable continuity with the past. One of the ways to carry out this project successfully is to bring into the scope of material to be interpreted other material which is closely related to it. This rule can assist us in trying to formulate the desiderata implied in the traditional belief that Judaism was a supernaturally revealed civilization. The cognate material that we should take into account for this purpose is none other than the three fundamental principles which Albo regarded as the sine qua non of Judaism as a supernaturally revealed civilization, namely the existence of God, the revealed character of Torah, and reward and punishment. By applying to these three principles the method of creative interpretation, we are likely to discover not only what desiderata they represent, but why such desiderata are a prerequisite to a civilization, if it is to help the society which lives by it to achieve self-fulfillment or salvation.

The first of these root principles is the belief in the existence of God. What are the significant facts in Albo's discussion of this principle? First, Albo does not ask us to believe in the existence of God, as Judah ha-Levi does, on the basis of an assumedly historical event, but on the basis of highly abstract reasoning.

This ill comforts with the very opening statement of his book, in which he takes for granted that "it is not possible by the human intellect alone to arrive at a proper knowledge of the true and the good. There must therefore be something higher than the human intellect by means of which the good can be defined and the true comprehended in a manner leaving no doubt at all." Yet he admits that reason is capable of adducing the existence of God. The rest follows naturally. Reason which is thus cavalierly dismissed at the front door, is invited back through the window, and made to feel quite at home (cf. I 2, p. 49) Secondly Albo is very emphatic in denying that it is possible for man to know God or to apprehend His essence. "The term existence when applied to God denotes nothing else but his quiddity. But his quiddity is absolutely unknown, as Maimonides says...the side of God's existence which is possible of comprehension is the consideration that all existing things are due to his influence and that he is their cause and maker" (II, 1, Vol. II, p.5) Like the previous fact, this one too is a great concession to reason which as far as the belief in God is concerned, goes no further than to identify within actual experience those aspects which constitute God's functioning in the world.

Both of these facts are entirely alien to the conception of God either in scripture or in rabbinics. They are taken over almost bodily from the philosophy of Aristotle. Yet that does not militate against their being incorporated into Jewish teaching. The reason is that, from the standpoint of a living civilization, what counts is the way ideas function and not their verbal formulation. That is especially true of the God idea in its relation to a civilization. Its function is not to acquaint us with the metaphysical essence of reality, but to impel us to utilize that civilization in such a manner as to help us behold the manifestation of the divine in the world.

What constitutes such a manifestation? Aristotle said power and perfection, and all his followers repeated his answer. Modern thinkers equally entitled to a hearing have furnished us with a more plausible answer, namely, worthwhileness and holiness. These appeal to the modern mind as those aspects of experience which give meaning to human life, and redeem its existence from the chaos of meaninglessness. What more than this did, practically speaking, all those who affirmed the existence of God really have to say that can stand the test of experience? But it is sufficient. On the other hand for life to be regarded as worthwhile and holy, it must necessarily be ~~such~~ such as to enable man to attain salvation. Thus the God idea as part of a civilization implies that it is the function of that civilization to enable those who live by it to achieve salvation.

Here then we have the first principle that is to be applied to Judaism as civilization. Its teachings must ~~be such as to~~ bear out the assumption of life's holiness and worthwhileness, ^{and} its practices and institutions ~~such as to~~ make for the salvation of the Jew. If some still hold to the traditional belief of a God who can be ~~influenced~~ influenced by petition to grant man's wishes -- that is if they find that only this conception of life renders life holy and worthwhile for them -- they certainly have a right to their views. If on the other hand there is a growing number of those who are learning to find life holy and worthwhile on other terms, they should be permitted to live in accordance with their idea of God. But a civilization which does not contribute to the experiencing of life's holiness and worthwhileness, both on the part of those within and those without that civilization, is definitely a barbarism. In ancient times that distinction was expressed by speaking of the civilization which fulfils that requirement as supernaturally

revealed, and of the others, as human. But the basic truth that the ancients sought to express about what constitutes the primary criterion of a civilization is that to which mankind will have to subscribe, if it is to be saved from barbarism namely that it must be conducive to the belief in God, as well as be based upon such belief. That belief to the modern minded man means that life is holy and worthwhile.

In the light of the foregoing, the conventional distinction between secular and holy, religious and non-religions, falls away. Every thing in the life of the individual and of society may be treated as having no meaning beyond itself, or perhaps only in relation to something immediately next to it, or it may be treated as opening up new worlds of meaning and render life more abundant and exhilarating. In the former case, experience is permitted to remain drab, meaningless, profane. In the latter instance, life proclaims the glory of God. Worship is from this standpoint the stimulation of the mind and heart by means of assembly, song and the spoken word to efforts in the direction of whatever makes for life being holy and worthwhile to the greatest number possible.

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Monday, December 12, 1938

A second root principle, which Albo names as basic to the acceptance of the Jewish civilization as supernatural or divine, is the belief in reward and punishment. Before attempting to get at the underlying desideratum that is implied in this belief, it is necessary to study it in its traditional setting. In that setting the belief in reward and punishment is integral to two fundamental assumptions, one about the world and the other about man, which in their literal form have, as a matter of course, become untenable. The one concerning the world is that the physical world in

which we live is a deteriorated form of the one God originally created, and that at some future time God will reconstruct it and eliminate all the evils of nature, suffering and cruelty. That is the world to come, wherein the righteous and those whose sins have been duly expiated will dwell forever. The assumption concerning man is that he is essentially immortal, and therefore not to be classed with other living beings. Consequently this world where he spends but a limited number of years and these mostly in sin and frustration cannot possibly be his real home. The center of his existence can be only in the world to come.

Again it is necessary to be reminded that the foregoing two assumptions did not constitute part of a particular phase of human life called religion, in contrast to other phases called science, art, practical affairs, etc. Those assumptions were inherent in the whole of pre-modern civilization. Every phase of that civilization, to the extent that it was thought out consistently, was permeated by those assumptions; the latter were basic not to religion as we understand it, but to each of the three great civilizations of those days, the Jewish, the Christian and the Moslem. The belief in reward and punishment merely expressed the logical basis of those assumptions and to a large extent also their historical origin. Not the result of experience, but rather a method of interpreting experience, that belief undoubtedly voiced a deeply felt human postulate, namely, that cognizance be taken of the difference between goodness and evil, justice and wrong doing. How could life have meaning, if it made no difference how we behaved, and if ~~was~~ no one took cognizance of our behavior? In ~~the~~ ancient times, when men were not given to close observation, the belief in reward and punishment encountered no difficulties. But when men reflected more and the evidences to the contrary became overwhelming,

the two assumptions stated above came to dominate the human mind. They did not have to be created ex nihilo; much in the ancient ideas about the world and man furnished ready material for them.

What we need now is to separate out of the foregoing thought complex the postulate that cognizance must be taken of the difference between goodness and evil, and weave it into the modern universe of discourse. This means treating that postulate in relation to a normative civilization as Albo and the other theologians treated the belief in reward and punishment in relation to a divine civilization. If we want Judaism to function as a normative civilization we must see to it that it functions in such a way as to enable the difference between goodness and evil, justice and wrong doing to be taken cognizance of in the fullest measure.

It is not difficult to state what that principle implies in terms of civilization. It implies the existence of ethical standards in all human relationships, standards that are not honored in the breach but in the observance. There is nothing more destructive of the meaning of life and of all its higher values than the dualism which prevails ordinarily, when on the one hand we profess the primacy of the virtues and on the other hand confer genuine honor and prestige on those who attain success in violation of the fundamental laws of justice. A state of society in which he who possesses might succeeds in gaining not only more might but also the applause of their fellows, while he who has a conscience has to pay for it dearly in deprivation and failure -- such a state of society is not a civilization, but a barbarism. With the center of gravity of human life definitely shifted to this world, the only possibility of that life realizing to the full the good latent in it, is a civilization in which there is the law of reward and punishment; that is, one in which the whole weight of that civilization, its education, its

public opinion and its ethical standards bears down upon the wrongdoer, however powerful, and uplifts and encourages the righteous, however humble.

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Wednesday, December 14, 1938

And finally the root principle of supernaturally revealed Torah. There are two elements to this principle: Torah and supernatural revelation, both of which have to be transposed into the key of modern thinking. Torah is essentially the organ of national life. Its ideology defines the place of the nation in the life of mankind, and it has to orient the nation cosmically. Its laws and institutions are intended to regulate the relationships of the individuals and groups among themselves and of each toward the people as a whole. The belief in the supernatural revelation of the Torah should be equated, as we have seen that belief ought to be in the case of a civilization (p.231) generally, with the function of enabling man to achieve salvation. Stated in modern terms, that belief as a root principle of Judaism means that in order that the Jewish civilization shall help the Jew achieve human perfection realize his highest potentialities or attain salvation, the organon of his national life, namely the ideology and laws of the Jewish people must be deliberately calculated to achieve that end. This principle provides us with the norm which must govern the development of Jewish national ideology and of Jewish law, namely the purpose of furthering the human perfection or the personal salvation of the individual Jew. When therefore a number of Jews find any element in the traditional or prevailing ideology or codes of laws that fails to further that purpose, and all the more if it hampers that purpose, they are in duty bound to see to it that such element be removed.

Whenever that kind of situation exists, we should act in keeping with the traditional rendering of the scripture and regard modification of Torah the only means to its preservation

Even if the entire weight of tradition were to resist modification of the Torah, as it apparently seems to do, it would be necessary to proceed with such modification, since the weight of experience counter-balances that of tradition, and that experience points to the irresistible fact that intangibility must lead to moral disaster. But the truth is that part of the weight of tradition is in line with yielding to change when necessary. There is, of course, the incontestable fact that what constituted Torah both in terms of ideology and law for one age, was very much different from what constituted Torah in another age. To insist, as the traditionalists do, that the Torah has been absolutely the same since the days of Moses, is to beg the question, and to ask those who are familiar with modern ethical studies to subscribe to assumptions that violate the fundamental laws of thought. The same applies to Talmudic ideology and law. The main difficulty, however, with such changes is that they came about on the whole quite unawares with those who effected them generally being convinced that they were merely reinstating pre-existing teaching or practice. This is why it pays to reckon with Albo's argument pertaining to the question of modification of the Torah in Iskorim III 13-14.

Before examining that argument, it is necessary to bear in mind that both rabbinic and medieval Jewish theologians had particular reason to be sensitive to the suggestion of the Torah as subject to modification. They were confronted by the challenge of Christianity and Mohammedanism, which by no means ignored the Mosaic Torah, but on the contrary regarded it as supernaturally revealed. Why then did not Christians and Mohammedans accept it as binding on them? Because they maintained that it had been superseded by subsequent revelation. The Jews, to justify their adherence to the Torah had to protest this claim with all their vigor. It was not the Torah's

modifiability as such that the Rabbis and Jewish philosophers resistance, but the Torah's supersession, by Christianity and Mohammedanism. With the grounds for such apprehension no longer in existence, they certainly would not have felt as strongly against the revision of Jewish ideology and law. And surely there can be no grounds, since the very demand for change arises from convictions that would relegate Christianity and Mohammedanism to the domain of the outlived even for their own peoples.

And now for Albo's argument. Raising the question, (III, 13) "whether it is possible that a given divine law of a given people should change in time, or whether it cannot change but must be eternal," ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ he replies that it cannot change for reasons based upon a consideration of the giver, of the recipient and of the law itself. To the consideration of the giver, God, he devotes one short paragraph. His point is that since it is inconceivable that God should change His will, it is inconceivable that He should change one law for another. To the consideration of the law itself he devotes also only a short paragraph. The point there is that since "the purpose of the divine Torah is to teach men intellectual conceptions and true opinions, there can be no reason for its changing at any time. For true opinion can never change." Here we are on shaky ground. In the first place, Albo narrows down the broad conception of human perfection as the purpose of the Torah to the one of teaching men intellectual conceptions. Secondly, he too begs the question when he says "true opinions can never change." It all depends what the opinions are about. True mathematical opinions may not change, although even that may be questioned, but certainly opinions about the nature of things, human relations, etc. That is to say what may have been true at a certain stage of knowledge and mental development may not be true at another stage.

But it is to the consideration of the recipient that he devotes most space, and it is there that he practically gives the argument away, and actually arrives at the opposite of what he sets out to prove. He sets out to prove that since the nation which received the law is the same, there is no reason why the law should change in course of time, especially as there is no analogy between a nation and individual in the matter of changing with time. But as he develops the argument, he proceeds to prove the very opposite, namely, that change may occur on the part of the recipient. In fact he utilizes the traditional beliefs stated in the Torah itself to the effect that what had been forbidden to Adam was later permitted to Noah, and that when Israel came the law was changed again, to prove that "divine commandments change with the times." But, of course, what he means is that God Himself can change His laws, not men. For our purpose, however, the issue is not affected by the limitation which he sets up, since that limitation belongs to the traditional approach. While in effect he certainly would not concede man's right to abrogate any law in the Torah his attitude is entirely different from that of Maimonides who makes the immutability of the Torah one of the thirteen cardinal doctrines. According to Albo the reason the Torah is still in force is that Moses, through whom it was revealed, has so far been the greatest of all prophets, and not because of the precept in the Torah "Thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it," on which Maimonides bases his doctrine.

In all this there is no intention to make the deliberate attempt to reconstruct Jewish tradition square with the traditional attitude toward change. The point made in the foregoing is that in that even in the armor of traditional teaching, with all its effort to be consistent and unyielding there are pregnable places. Change is the law of life, and no living Judaism could possibly evade that law.

But in recent years the process of changes has accelerated to a degree which necessitates deliberate reckoning with it, no matter what phase of human life we happen to deal with. After all our object is not to justify the repudiation of the traditional Torah for some radically new revelation. On the contrary our interest is to maintain as far as possible a sense of continuity with the past, but not at the expense of maladjustment in the present. The principle of "which if man do, he may live by them" is to be our main guide.

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Thursday, December 15, 1938

The question now is: what next? What should be the procedure to implement the foregoing approach to Judaism? This is the question which I am supposed to take up with Bentwich and Alon. Let me constitute for the present a committee by myself and thrash out this question with myself.

My first thought is that we should to formulate from the standpoint of the foregoing conception of Judaism our ideas concerning what ought to constitute Jewish ethics, Jewish law, Jewish folkways and Jewish worship.

* * *

Friday, December 16, 1938

When I woke up early this morning long before it was time to get out of bed, the following lines kept on repeating in my mind and didn't let me fall asleep again until I got up and jotted them down: Who am I?/ I am I./ What am I?/ Dust that breathes,/ Breath that sings/ Song that dies,/ But in dying, Lives in You.

* * *

Saturday night, December 17, 1938

This morning the "Bentwich" group met at my house. I read about one-third of an abstract I drew up in Hebrew of the material given above. Those present were Dushkin, Bentwich, Blum, Rieger, Ben-Zeev. The discussion was lively. Rieger expressed approval of my humanist approach. Bentwich made two points 1) that the religious approach to life means something ~~either~~ ^{other} or more than merely finding life worthwhile. It means affirming the reality of the truth and the just in spite of all that life may mean. It calls (if I understood him aright) for the creation of a world that transcends experience. The second point was, that we should not try to find a common denominator between our religion or civilization and other expressions of modern collective life like Nazism or Communism. He took the attitude implied in the verse (p.234) and was, therefore, opposed even to what he regarded as dignifying them by calling them false or counterfeit religions or civilizations. Blum, on the contrary, maintained that we should not indulge in comparisons, because our interest in fostering Judaism should be based upon the fact that it is our civilization and not because it is better than other civilizations. Dushkin stressed the point that had been made by Reiger that we were interested chiefly in synthesizing Judaism with democracy, and in giving to democracy the element ~~of~~ of direction and mission lacking to it at present.

In conclusion, I summed up my argument by stating that in what I had said my purpose was to formulate a sort of prolegomenon to a program of reconstruction of Judaism, by reinterpreting in the terminology of the day the acceptable elements of Albo's conception of Judaism, and treating his three cardinal principles in their reinterpreted form as the requirements which Judaism as a civilization must meet if it is to function as means of self-fulfillment or salvation.

Roth has refused to join the group, because he is mainly interested, he said, in theological discussion and not in practical measures of reform. Dr. Schlesinger was asked to join, and he refused because he had lost interest in the God idea. Bentwich takes the matter very seriously, but I am afraid that with his absolutistic approach he won't be of much help. Blum is so eager to go ahead with practical effort that he came to this morning's session with copies of a program he had drawn up for the reformation of Judaism. I wonder whether Hitler would have been able to get very far with his burning zeal for a new Germany with human material like the foregoing.

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Saturday night, December 24, 1938

The second Sabbath meeting of the Bentwich group took place this morning at Rieger's home. Present were Bentwich, Rieger, Alon, Konowitz, Blum, Ernst and Fritz Simon, Herlig, Dushkin and I. I gave a summary of the part of the paper I read last Sabbath and concluded the rest of it.

During the week Dushkin who took part in the discussion which had been arranged in Haifa in honor of the 25th anniversary of the Biram School told me that the paper I had sent Biram was read and favorably received.

Last night Dr. and Mrs. Bardin called on us. Bardin is about 38. He came from Russia about 19 years ago, and after some time here came to America to study at Teachers College where he got his doctorate. After he tried out one or two educational undertakings here he succeeded in organizing a technical school in Haifa, which numbers at present about 250 pupils and serves as a preparatory school for the Technion. In addition he organized recently in that

school and heads the department of navigation. There are about 40 students in the first year class.

All evening he lectured Dushkin and me on the duty of the University here to change the educational attitude of our people in Palestine who are all for the humanities in the secondary schools, and oppose the introduction of technical studies. I feel as strongly as he does on the subject, both from an educational point of view and from the standpoint of the economic development of the country. If I hadn't been planning to go back to America to effect that change in attitude would have been one of my main interests.

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Sunday, December 25, 1938

This morning, brief exercises in connection with the granting of certificates to those who completed the pedagogic courses at the University took place in the Mathematics Hall. The following is the story behind these exercises. After many debates in the various bodies (they speak of them as "Instanzeri") of the University as to what should be the status of the University students who had gotten their M.A. and had completed these courses, it was finally decided to grant them a kind of temporary teachers' diploma. When this decision was brought before the Curatorium (Board of Trustees) at its meeting last summer in London, it was voided by the decision to grant this and all following classes of students only certificates of attendance at the courses, so long as there is no chair in general psychology. Neither Dushkin nor I was disposed to do anything about this and certainly not the local authorities of the University. But the initiative was taken by the students themselves. Ziegelbaum and Elkins, both of them employees of the University, got after me to bring the matter to a conclusion. I got in touch with the Standing Committee and urged them to take action. They decided to do nothing

more than give the students typewritten statements certifying to their having attended the courses. This ~~xx~~ the students resulted, and I had to get in touch again with the Standing Committee pointing out to them the inappropriateness of typewritten certificates, and asked them for permission to hold some kind of official exercises. This was grudgingly granted. Finally the date, place and people to be invited were attended to, when the rector Frankel discovered he cannot attend. I then called him up and asked him to send in at least greetings. But after he sent me the few words of greeting, either Dr. Ben-David or Ibn-Zahab (the two secretaries) persuaded him to attend. Only one more obstacle had to be removed. The students wanted that there should appear a report in the press about the exercises. This time Ben-David balked and Frenkel, who had decided to come ruled that there was to be no announcement prior to the exercises taking place, but he saw no reason why they could not be reported after they took place.

The exercises consisting of the following: At the tables arranged in V form were seated Frenkel in the chair, I next to him, next to me Dushkin, Brill, Asaf, Ibn-Ari. On the left of Frenkel were Schocken (Chairman of Local Exec. Comm.) Prof. Gutmann (Dean of Humanities) Prof. Jekete (Dean of Science) Dr. Rieger.

Eight students were to be recipients of the certificates and were seated in the first row of chairs in front but only six were present, viz. Elkus, Greenspan, Ziegelbaum, Yanner, Rabinowitz and Wieser. The two absent were Fekete (who holds no position) and David (who teaches at Haifa).

Frenkel opened the exercises with a few words. I followed with a prepared address which lasted about 15-20 minutes. Then Frenkel gave out the certificates and Dushkin concluded also with a prepared address.

Elkus later described the exercises as resembling a re-marriage ceremony of a widow or a divorcee. Not bad.

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Monday, December 26, 1938

I resumed today my lectures ~~at~~ ^{on} the History of Ed. after the week's interruption on account of the Hanukkah vacation. Recalling that I was not satisfied with the way I lectured two weeks ago, because I had worked on other matters in the morning, I decided to use this morning for going over in my mind carefully what I was going to lecture on today. As a result I am sure the lecture proved far more interesting to the students.

But as so often happens here, something always turns up before long to mar one's contentment. On the way home I noticed that there was again one of those ominous crowds in front of the Hadassah Hospital. The chauffeur informed me that a Jewish young man was killed two hours ago in the (p.236?) neighborhood by an assassin who fired 4 bullets at him.

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Tuesday, January 3, 1939

Last Thursday I sent Dr. Senator, the administrator of the Hebrew University the letter in which I notified the authorities of my resolve to go back to America at the end of the academic year.

That same day Lena and I had lunch with him. The other guests were the American Consul (Wadsworth) and his wife, Edwin Samuel, Prof and Mrs. Kligler and Mr. & Mrs. Agransky. What special purpose is served by such luncheons I cannot make out.

Naomi returned to Beirut today to resume her medical studies at the American University there. She came on Thursday, Dec. 22 ill with a slight attack of jaundice. Thank G. she recovered

